

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POETRY AND POULTRY

Poetry is the corpse you stumble over after jumping out of bed late for work again.

The alarm clock says, "No time for a shower" and the corpse prone on the carpet suddenly sits up and offers, "That's ok, Joel. You run off to work. I'll take your shower for you."

Poultry, although delectable when barbecued, is never so considerate.

NIGHT SHIFT

The night watchman leans against a beam and lights up a smoke. His feet and head ache, he's an insomniac by trade. With no one to talk with he's surrounded by questions. Comes with the job, the late night territory.

Things resembling Direct Questions fly up before him without so much as a warning. Surprise the hell out of him. When he makes his warehouse rounds he always bumps into Rhetorical Questions, frozen like hot dogs in mid-air. They drop to the floor and shatter; an upsetting noise in a deserted warehouse at 4 a.m. His nerves aren't what they used to be. His heart has grown fragile as a glass parakeet on a glass roost.

When everyone in the world is crawling to work through the morning light, the night watchman slinks home to his insanely jealous wife of thirty-five years. She keeps him awake for hours with bright lamps trained on his face, all the while nagging, applying the Third Degree.

-- Joel Dailey

Endicott NY